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Governor
Gretchen Whitmer



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 6, 2021

Contact: press@michigan.gov

Gov. Whitmer Orders Flags Lowered to Honor Former Attorney General Frank J. Kelley

LANSING, Mich. – Governor Gretchen Whitmer has ordered U.S. and Michigan flags within the State Capitol Complex and upon all public buildings and grounds across the state of Michigan to be lowered to half-staff immediately on Saturday, March 6 through Saturday, March 20 to honor the life and service of former Attorney General Frank J. Kelley.

“Frank J. Kelley was one of my absolute favorite people from whom to get advice, perspective, or humor,” said **Governor Whitmer**. “He was a never-ending fount of wisdom and fun. From his college days to the battles he fought as Michigan’s longest serving attorney general, he always had stories and insight into the human condition and generosity of time. I know I am among countless, fortunate people who had the honor of working with the brilliant and irascible Frank J. Kelley. He will be missed but his mark on Michigan will be felt – as generations were benefited by his leadership. His endorsement of and counsel to candidates like me meant as much to us as it did to the public we hoped to serve. I’ll forever be grateful to my friend, Mr. Kelley.”

Frank J. Kelley was born in Detroit, Michigan in 1924. He attended the University of Detroit for both an undergraduate and law degree. Kelley later moved to Alpena to serve as the city attorney.

Frank J. Kelley, a Democrat, was the longest-serving attorney general in Michigan history, earning him the nickname as Michigan’s ‘eternal general’ for his 37 years of service. He was first appointed to the position in 1961 by Governor John Swainson, and served until 1999.

Perhaps more than anyone else, Frank J. Kelley helped shape the modern office of the state attorney general. For example, he was one of the first attorneys general to create a consumer protection unit and an environmental protection unit within the office. Frank Kelley was the consummate ‘People’s Lawyer’.

Frank J. Kelley passed away on Friday, March 5 at 96 years old.

The State of Michigan recognizes the duty, honor and selfless service of former Attorney General Frank J. Kelley by lowering flags to half-staff. Michigan residents, businesses, schools, local governments and other organizations also are encouraged to display the flag at half-staff.

To lower flags to half-staff, flags should be hoisted first to the peak for an instant and then lowered to the half-staff position. The process is reversed before the flag is lowered for the day.

Flags should be returned to full-staff on Sunday, March 21.

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